

last five years, sea ice in the Arctic Circle has been at its lowest levels on record, and there has been a 35 percent decrease in thicker multi-year sea ice. These are symptoms of climate change, and represent a threat to fragile ecosystems and Arctic inhabitants. Hydrographic research is necessary to improve scientific understanding of the Arctic system and its adaptation to the dramatic environmental changes it is currently experiencing.

Rising sea levels in the Arctic have also altered sea routes and coastlines, compounding the need for new hydrographic research to produce updated navigational charts. Because the region has heretofore been relatively inaccessible, information about the Arctic is lacking in comparison to information about other American marine and coastal areas. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Arctic currently has minimal tide, current, and water level prediction coverage, obsolete shoreline and hydrographic data, unsatisfactory nautical charts, and poor weather and ice forecast coverage. Moreover, most Arctic waters that have been charted were surveyed with obsolete hydrographic technology, as far back as the 1800s, and most of Alaska's northern and western shoreline has not been mapped since 1960, if ever. New hydrographic data on the Arctic region is sorely needed. Charts produced from new research will ensure the safety of both civilians and the Coast Guard as they live and work near and on our Arctic waters.

The opening of new Arctic sea routes as the polar ice caps melt also has political implications. Recent geological surveys indicate that as many as 90 billion recoverable barrels of oil and 2 trillion cubic feet of natural gas may be present in the Arctic Circle. With unprece-

dent access to these resources made possible by climate change, the contentious debate over drilling in the Arctic will continue to intensify, as will disputes over coastal borders between circumpolar nations. The better the U.S. understands the nature of our Arctic territory, the better prepared we will be to participate in the international conversation about the future of Arctic policy.

I support this bill because new hydrographic research is necessary to gather the most accurate data about our Arctic coastline and natural resources. This data would include oceanographic tidal, current, and wave information; depth measurements for bodies of water; information on navigational hazards and considerations; and updated navigational maps of the area. With this data, the Coast Guard and research institutes can inform the American public and government about the Arctic to the best of their abilities. To make this possible, I urge Congress to pass H.R. 2864, to authorize funds for hydrographic research in the Arctic.

I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 5283

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 2010

Ms. CLARKE. Madam Speaker, I rise today as a proud cosponsor of H.R. 5283, the Help Haiti Act of 2010, introduced by my colleague Congressman JEFF FORTENBERRY. This bill normalizes the immigration procedures for certain adopted Haitian orphans that received hu-

manitarian parole between January 18, 2010 and April 15, 2010. It allows their adoptive families, who are U.S. citizens, to apply immediately on their behalves to become legal permanent residents and eventually qualify for citizenship.

As the Representative of the second largest population of first and second generation Haitian immigrants, Haiti has been at the core of my Caribbean agenda. That is why I am extremely concerned that more than 1,000 paroled Haitian orphans being adopted by American families remain in immigration limbo due to a legal technicality. It is alarming that these children have to wait two years before they are granted legal permanent residency. If this situation is not addressed, these children will remain in this country without certain legal protections and are in jeopardy of being separated from their adoptive family and deported back to Haiti where they have no family.

The legal technicality that put these kids in such a precarious position is yet another example of why our nation needs comprehensive immigration reform. That is why I am committed to working with my colleagues to make immigration reform a reality as soon as possible. Our national security is at stake; our moral standing in the world depends on it; and the American people, many of whom are first and second generation immigrants, demand it. I urge Congress to take a fresh look at the antiquated policies and bureaucratic backlogs that tear families apart and devastate our communities.

Finally, I commend Congressman FORTENBERRY for addressing this issue and his continued support for the children of Haiti.